

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-08 INR-10 LAB-04
NSAE-00 SIL-01 DODE-00 PM-05 H-02 L-03 NSC-05
PA-02 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15 INT-05 /090 W
-----106983 150557Z /17

R 141856Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY BONN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6757
INFO AMCONSUL BREMEN
AMCONSUL DUSSELDORF
AMCONSUL FRANKFURT
AMCONSUL HAMBURG
AMCONSUL MUNICH
AMCONSUL STUTTGART
USMISSION USBERLIN
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY DUBLIN
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

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USEEC ALSO FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: ELAB, GW
SUBJECT: LABOR - TALKS IN METAL AND PRINTING INDUSTRIES
BREAK DOWN

REF: (A) BONN 04423; (B) BONN 04303; (C) BONN 04233

1. FOLLOWING TALKS OVER THE WEEKEND BETWEEN THE EXECU-
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TIVE BOARDS OF THE IG METALL UNION AND THE NATIONAL
EMPLOYERS GROUP, GESAMTMETALL, THE REGIONAL BARGAINING
COMMISSIONS FOR BOTH SIDES IN NORTH BADEN-WUERTTEMBERG
(NBW) AND NORTH RHINE-WESTPHALIA (NRW) RESUMED NEGOTIATIONS.
BY MID-DAY OF MARCH 13, HOWEVER, THE NEGOTIATIONS WERE
STALEMATED. THE EMPLOYERS REFUSED TO PUSH THEIR OFFER ABOVE
THE 4 TO 5 PERCENT RANGE AND THE

UNIONS INSISTED ON A FIGURE ABOVE 5 PERCENT. THE EMPLOYERS' LAST OFFER WAS REPORTED BY A UNION SOURCE TO HAVE BEEN 4.6 PERCENT.

2. PREPARATIONS FOR A METAL STRIKE IN NBW ARE PROCEEDING AND THE STRIKE IS EXPECTED TO COMMENCE AT MIDNIGHT MARCH 14. NO DECISION HAS BEEN MADE YET BY THE UNION TO STRIKE IN NORTH RHINE-WESTPHALIA (NRW), WHERE NEGOTIATIONS WERE ALSO STALLED, BUT ACCORDING TO UNION SOURCES, THE NECESSARY PREPARATIONS HAVE BEEN MADE TO CALL A STRIKE THERE ON SHORT NOTICE. THE EMPLOYERS IN NRW HAVE REPORTEDLY REJECTED A LOCKOUT AT THIS TIME, BUT WILL BE WATCHING CAREFULLY THE DEVELOPMENTS IN NBW TO PLAN THEIR NEXT MOVE.

3. NEGOTIATIONS HAVE ALSO COLLAPSED IN THE PRINTING INDUSTRY WHERE FEDERAL EMPLOYMENT SERVICE PRESIDENT, JOSEF STINGL, INJECTED HIMSELF INTO THE PROCEEDINGS AT THE LAST MINUTE IN AN ATTEMPT TO GET THE PARTIES TOGETHER. AFTER HAVING BEEN REJECTED AS AN OFFICIAL MEDIATOR ONLY A FEW DAYS BEFORE, STINGL REAPPEARED IN THE STALLED TALKS AS AN UNOFFICIAL CONCILIATOR, TRYING TO GET THE PARTIES TO MAKE A LAST ATTEMPT TO FIND A SOLUTION TO THEIR DISPUTE. HIS EFFORTS FAILED. IN THE FACE OF CONTINUED SELECTIVE STRIKES BY THE UNION, THE EMPLOYERS HAVE ANNOUNCED AN UNLIMITED LOCKOUT WHICH UNCLASSIFIED

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WILL SHUT DOWN VIRTUALLY EVERY NEWSPAPER IN THE FRG BEGINNING AT 06:00 HRS MARCH 14.

4. CHANCELLOR SCHMIDT HAS APPEALED TO ALL PARTIES TO ACT REASONABLY AND DISPLAY A "SENSE OF PROPORTION". GOVERNMENT LEADERS ARE NOT TAKING AN ACTIVE ROLE PUBLICLY, BUT ARE CERTAINLY NOT DISINTERESTED OBSERVERS. THE POTENTIAL POLITICAL DAMAGE TO THE GOVERNMENT FROM PROLONGED TURBULENCE IN MAJOR INDUSTRIAL SECTORS IS CONSIDERABLE. EVEN AFTER THE METAL AND PUBLISHING ISSUES ARE SETTLED, THE COUNTRY WILL HAVE TO FACE ADDITIONAL ROUNDS OF TOUGH BARGAINING IN OTHER IMPORTANT SECTORS INCLUDING MINING AND PUBLIC SERVICE. MEEHAN

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